

Teen tells how 'best friends' murdered Smart

Grand jury takes up case today

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A Seabrook teen said Thursday his three best friends told him they murdered Derry insurance salesman Greg Smart. He is the second teen to come forward in a week detailing conversations with the three suspects, now charged in the slaying.

Meanwhile, a Rockingham County grand jury is expected to begin hearing testimony today in the Smart murder case.

The teen, a sophomore at Winnacunnet High School, said the three suspects told him sometime around May 30 how they killed Smart in his Summerhill condominium in Derry.

Smart, 24, was found May 1 in

the foyer of his home at 10:30 p.m. by his wife, Pamela, when she returned from a school board meeting. Smart was murdered by a single gunshot wound to the head. The gun believed to be the murder weapon was recovered by police.

Authorities continue to decline comment on any information regarding the murder.

The juveniles are not being named because of state laws protecting the identity of minors. Currently, the state is trying to gather necessary evidence to certify the teens as adults, so they can be tried on higher charges. If they stand trial as adults, one will be tried for first-degree murder and the other two will be charged as ac-

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~~complices to first-degree murder.~~ Both charges are punishable by life in prison without a chance of parole.

If the juveniles are tried as minors, they will be detained at a state youth center until they are 18 years old. The minors are now 16 and 17 years of age.

The youth, who has provided the Derry Police with testimony against the three suspects, described himself as a lifelong friend of two of the minors charged.

"I've only known --- (one of the suspects names) for three years, but the rest I've known for life," he said of his former best friends.

He said sometime around May 30, the three suspects took him into a room in one of their

homes, where he was living at the time, and told him they murdered the Derry man.

He said they told him two of them went into the house, where one held Smart and the other pulled the trigger of the gun. The third youth drove the getaway car and supplied the gun from his father's gun collection, he said.

"They just said he was worth more dead than alive," the youth said.

The youth said his immediate reaction was to get away from the trio after he heard the news.

At that time, the three suspects also said 19-year-old Raymond Fowler rode with them to Derry that night. Fowler told the Derry News last week he drove with the three to Derry, but didn't know why they were going there until after the

youths told him on the way back to Seabrook.

~~The youth said the suspects~~ turned on him and beat him up when he refused to condone what they had done.

"It didn't even bother them," he said. "I just got away from them. I didn't want to be with them. They weren't my friends anymore."

He said he went to Maine that night to find Fowler and to tell him what exactly happened. He said Fowler told him he had nothing to do with the murder.

"He (Fowler) said he didn't do nothing," said the youth.

The youth told police of the confession the next day. Fowler went to police with his testimony the day after the youth.

Both teens were offered protective custody by Derry Police after cooperating with the investigation. The youth was the

only one to accept the offer and was held in protective custody for three days.

"I think they deserve to be tried as adults," said the youth. "They knew perfectly well what they were doing. I will go on the stand and testify against them. I will do anything I have to."

The youth said he has been depressed ever since that night when his closest friends told him how they murdered Smart.

"They were my three best friends," he said. "You think you know them good and you don't even know them at all."

Rockingham County Attorney Carlton Eldredge said Friday the grand jury will begin meeting Tuesday. The Smart murder case is on the jury's agenda for this session, he said.

"It's on the list," Eldredge said.